

## Chapter 5: Sections 4(f)/6(f) Evaluation

The following evaluation addresses the impacts of the Southern Corridor on Section 4(f) properties. Section 4(f) requirements are set forth in 49 U.S.C. 303 and 23 CFR 771.135. There are no Section 6(f) properties along any of the proposed Southern Corridor alternatives.

Many of the impacts summarized in this chapter have been more fully described in Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences.

### 5.1 Proposed Action

The proposed Southern Corridor would be a four-lane, limited-access highway beginning at I-15 about 3 miles north of the Arizona border near the southwest end of St. George and connecting with SR 9 near Hurricane. The entire project is located in Washington County, Utah. Depending on the alternative selected, the highway would be between 20 and 26 miles long. A multiple-use trail for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians would parallel the highway.

#### 5.1.1 Purpose and Need

The primary purpose of the Southern Corridor is to provide a regional transportation facility between St. George, Washington City, and Hurricane that would complement local land use plans. The project would also accommodate areas of future growth, reduce some traffic on the existing and future network of arterial and city streets, and improve conditions in areas already developed. The Southern Corridor is not being proposed to reduce traffic on I-15 through St. George, Washington City, and Hurricane.

#### 5.1.2 Project Alternatives

This EIS evaluates four alternatives: No-Build, 4300 West, 3400 West, and 2800 West. All build alternatives would include a trail system for pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians.

##### 5.1.2.1 No-Build Alternative

The Council on Environmental Quality regulations (CEQ 1981) require that an EIS include a “no-action” (or “no-build”) alternative which, in this case, consists of not building the Southern Corridor. The No-Build Alternative would consist of improving the existing arterial system, adding a new interchange on I-15 at RP 13, and improving the existing interchange at RP 10 in Washington City. The

No-Build Alternative would be implemented as part of the cities' future transportation planning to provide access to new developments as they are built to meet the expected growth.

#### **5.1.2.2 4300 West Alternative**

The 4300 West Alternative would start at the I-15 interchange at about RP 3 and extend 20 miles to the intersection of 4300 West with SR 9 near Hurricane. This alternative is the most westerly on SR 9. It would include about 11 interchanges on the Southern Corridor.

#### **5.1.2.3 3400 West Alternative**

The 3400 West Alternative would start at the I-15 interchange at about RP 3 and extend 22 miles to the intersection of 3400 West with SR 9 near Hurricane. This alternative would include about 10 interchanges on the Southern Corridor.

#### **5.1.2.4 2800 West Alternative**

The 2800 West Alternative would start at the I-15 interchange at about RP 3 and extend 26 miles to the intersection of 2800 West with SR 9 in Hurricane. This alternative is the most easterly on SR 9. It would include about 12 interchanges on the Southern Corridor.

## **5.2 Section 4(f) Properties**

For the Southern Corridor project, a review of potential 4(f) properties was conducted. Based on the review, no 4(f) properties were impacted. Provided below is an analysis of potential 4(f) properties. The FHWA regulation, Section 4(f) (49 U.S.C. 303; 23 CFR 771.135), states that:

The [Federal Highway] Administration [FHWA] may not approve the use of land from a significant publicly owned public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or any significant historic site unless a determination is made that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of land from the property, and the action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use.

### 5.2.1 Sand Hollow Recreation Area

The Sand Hollow Recreation Area is a proposed 16,564-acre site on BLM-administered land within the Sand Mountain SRMA that will provide recreation opportunities in a scenic dune cliff environment for OHV users, equestrians, and hikers. The area within the SRMA but outside the Sand Hollow Recreation Area has only incidental, secondary, occasional, and/or dispersed recreational activities and is therefore not considered a 4(f) property.

The proposed Sand Hollow Recreation Area is next to the proposed Sand Hollow Reservoir, which will be operated by WCWCD (see Figure 5-1, Section 4(f) Properties). The two areas combined will serve as one of the premier recreation areas in Utah. The Sand Hollow Recreation Area will include developed campground sites, staging areas to accommodate equestrian and motorized access on Sand Mountain, and trails linked to designated areas near the reservoir. While the proposed Sand Hollow Recreation Area is on BLM-administered lands, the reservoir is on private land administered by WCWCD.

The proposed recreation area will be managed cooperatively by the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation in partnership with BLM and WCWCD. WCWCD will administer the lands and facilities around the reservoir, while day-to-day management of these lands and facilities will be the responsibility of Parks and Recreation. Similarly, while BLM will continue to administer the Sand Hollow Recreation Area, both BLM and Parks and Recreation will jointly manage recreation activities within this area. It is expected that once the recreation area is completed, up to 500,000 recreationists will visit this area annually.

As part of the Sand Hollow project, a Sand Hollow Recreation Area Recreation Management Plan was developed by WCWCD, BLM, and the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation. This plan shows an exterior commuter road providing general access to the park area with an independent interior road system constructed around the reservoir's southern half to control access (see Figure 5-2, Proposed Facilities). It is planned that fencing would be installed around the commuter road to control access to the park area.

The 2800 West Alternative follows the same alignment as the proposed Sand Hollow commuter road and could be jointly developed. Because the commuter road is part of Recreation Area Management Plan, it is considered a planned transportation corridor. Section 4(f) does not apply to highway construction on a reserved ROW if it has been previously planned. Therefore, this site is not carried forward in the 4(f) analysis.

## 5.2.2 Historic Structures and Archaeological Sites

The FHWA regulation 23 CFR 771.135, Section 4(f) (49 U.S.C. 303), states:

In determining the application of Section 4(f) to historic sites, the [FHWA], in cooperation with the applicant, will consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and appropriate local officials to identify all properties on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.... The Section 4(f) requirements apply only to sites on or eligible for the [NRHP], unless the [FHWA] determines that the application of Section 4(f) is otherwise appropriate.

Eighty-five eligible historic properties were identified in the project area, and up to 23 are adversely affected by the Southern Corridor build alternatives. Section 4(f) applies to all NRHP-eligible historic properties that are important for preservation in place. Section 4(f) does not apply to archaeological historic properties that are important only for their information potential. Therefore, of these sites, seven have been determined to warrant preservation in place (see Table 5.2-1).

**Table 5.2-1. Archaeological Sites that Warrant Preservation in Place**

Smithsonian Site Number	Cultural Affiliation	Site Type	Alternative	Adversely Affected
42Ws3567	Virgin Anasazi	Rock shelter	3400 West	No
42Ws3884	Euro-American	Canal	All Alternatives	No
42Ws3886	Virgin Anasazi	Habitation	All Alternatives	No
42Ws3888	Virgin Anasazi	Prehistoric rock art	4300 West 3400 West	No
42Ws3894	Late Archaic, Virgin Anasazi, and Southern Paiute	Rock shelter	3400 West	No
42Ws4273	Virgin Anasazi	Rock shelter	3400 West	No
42Ws54	Virgin Anasazi/Southern Paiute	Habitation, lithic and ceramic scatter, rock art	4300 West	Yes

Of these, only 42Ws54 is adversely affected by the 4300 West Alternative. The site consists of extensive lithic and ceramic scatter in association with a Virgin Anasazi pueblo on a mesa top. Six panels of rock art were identified during a 1989 inventory. Some data recovery of the site was conducted in 1991 for UDOT for an SR 9 widening project. Of the six rock art panels identified during the 1989 inventory, only a single panel remains. Other features of the site may have been affected during the widening of SR 9. The site warrants preservation in place because the site embodies characteristics beyond information potential since it includes a rock art panel and the potential for human remains. The site is on private and state land with the only access provided by foot. The size of the site is about 21 acres.

The rock art panel and main human habitation area of the site are the portion that warrant preservation in place with the remainder of the site important only for information potential. Minor adjustments to the alignment to avoid the site were made; however, because of the proximity of the Virgin River to the north, the alignment could not be moved to completely avoid the site. Moving the alignment to the north would require construction in the Virgin River which would substantially increase cost, cause water quality and wetland impacts, and impact threatened and endangered fish species that inhabit the river.

With the minor alignment shift, only the margins of site 42Ws54 are affected. The affected part of the site is important only for information potential and therefore is not considered a 4(f) property. The rock art panel and habitation area that warrant preservation in place would not be affected; therefore, this site is not carried forward in the 4(f) analysis.

### 5.2.3 Trails

Both pedestrian/bicycle and recreation trails cross the project area. Provided below is a 4(f) evaluation of these resources.

***Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails.*** The primary trail system within the study area is the Three Rivers Trail, which is a system of existing and planned trails. The existing Virgin River Trail is a part of the Three Rivers Trail system. In addition, other community trails cross the study area, as shown in Figure 3-10, Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails. As discussed in Section 4.7, Impacts on Consideration Related to Pedestrians and Bicyclists, and as shown in Figure 3-10, none of the proposed Southern Corridor build alternatives would impact any of these existing trail systems. In addition, the proposed Southern Corridor would provide a benefit to proposed future trails by providing a link with other trails in the study. The proposed future trails bisected by the Southern Corridor alternatives are on private land. Overall there would be no “use” under Section 4(f).

***Trails.*** As discussed in Section 3.3.9, Recreation Resources, and as shown in Figure 3-9, Recreational Resources, the three trails in the study area are the Honeymoon Trail, Temple Trail, and Dominguez-Escalante Trail. None of these trails are marked or defined within the study area. In addition, these trails are not eligible for the NRHP. Because these trails are not eligible for the NRHP and are not defined in the study area, there would be no 4(f) impacts. Therefore, these trails are not evaluated further.

In addition to the above resources, no other public recreational facilities would be impacted, and therefore no 4(f) impacts would occur.

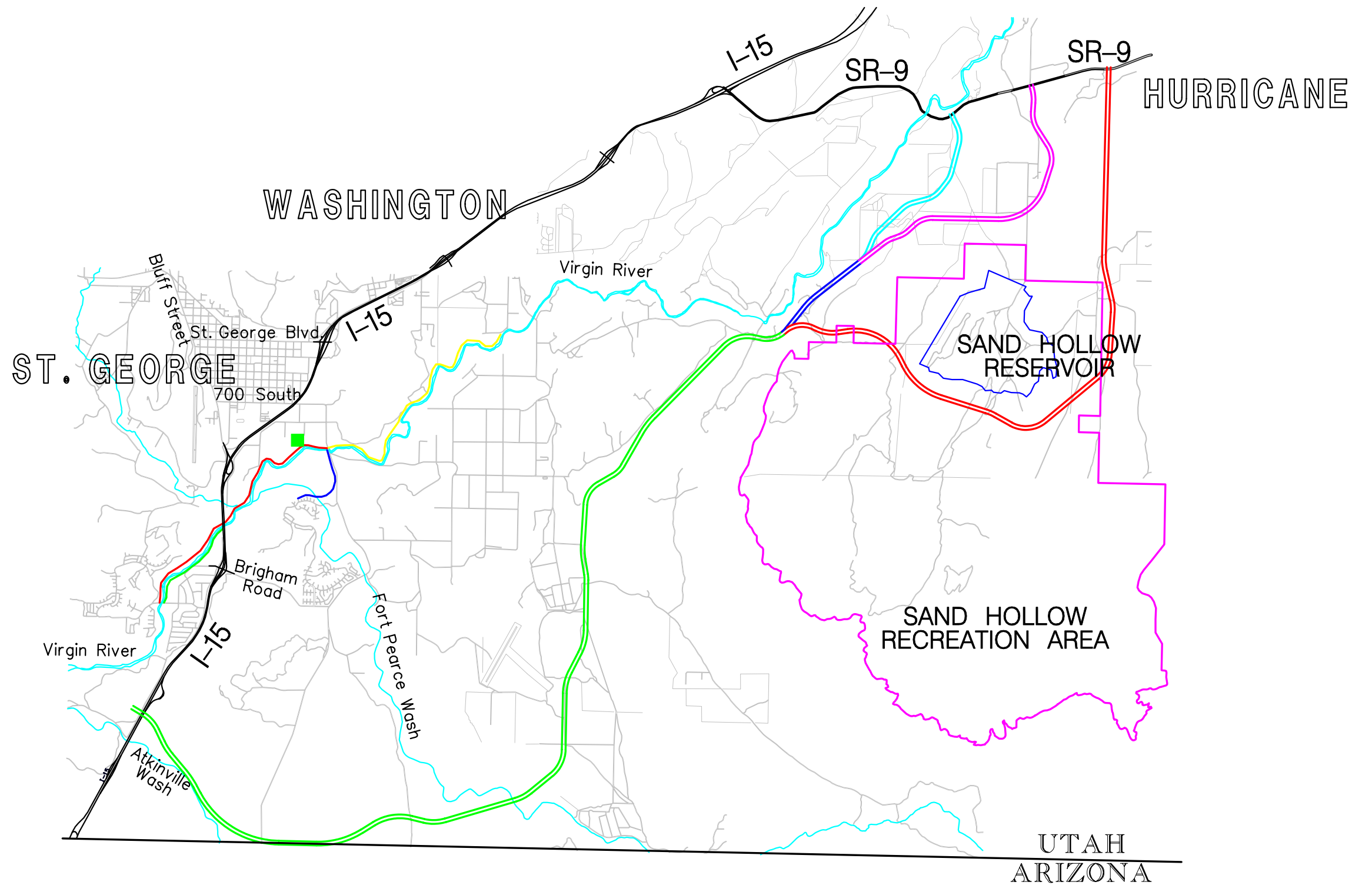
#### **5.2.4 Warner Ridge/Fort Pearce ACEC**

This 4,281-acre ACEC is southeast of St. George and within the Sand Mountain SRMA. This area is currently open to mineral entry and is not considered a wildlife refuge by BLM. However, BLM has recommended that the area be withdrawn from mining entry. The BLM Resource Management Plan states that BLM will work with the sponsors of the Southern Corridor to define the environmentally preferred alternative through the area.

BLM has been involved in the Southern Corridor planning process and has helped to develop an alignment through the ACEC that avoids impacts to sensitive resources and benefits these resources by controlling unauthorized recreation access to closed areas. Because the Warner Ridge/Fort Pearce ACEC does not currently meet the “refuge” characteristics that are protected under Section 4(f), it is not evaluated as a 4(f) property. FHWA and UDOT will continue to coordinate with BLM to avoid and minimize impacts to this ACEC.

### **5.3 Impacts on Section 4(f) Properties**

No Section 4(f) properties are impacted by the build alternatives.



# LEGEND

- Sand Hollow Reservoir
- Sand Hollow Recreation Area
- All Alternatives
- 4300 and 3400 West Alternatives
- 4300 West Alternative
- 3400 West Alternative
- 2800 West Alternative

- Existing Virgin River Trail / Three Rivers Trail
- Proposed Bloomington South
- Proposed Virgin River South
- Proposed Virgin River Trail- Phase II / Three Rivers Trail
- Cox Park

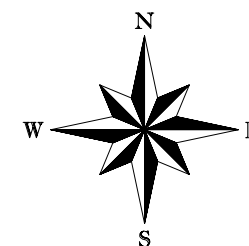
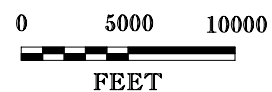


Figure 5-1

## SECTION 4(F) RESOURCES

Southern Corridor EIS  
March 2003



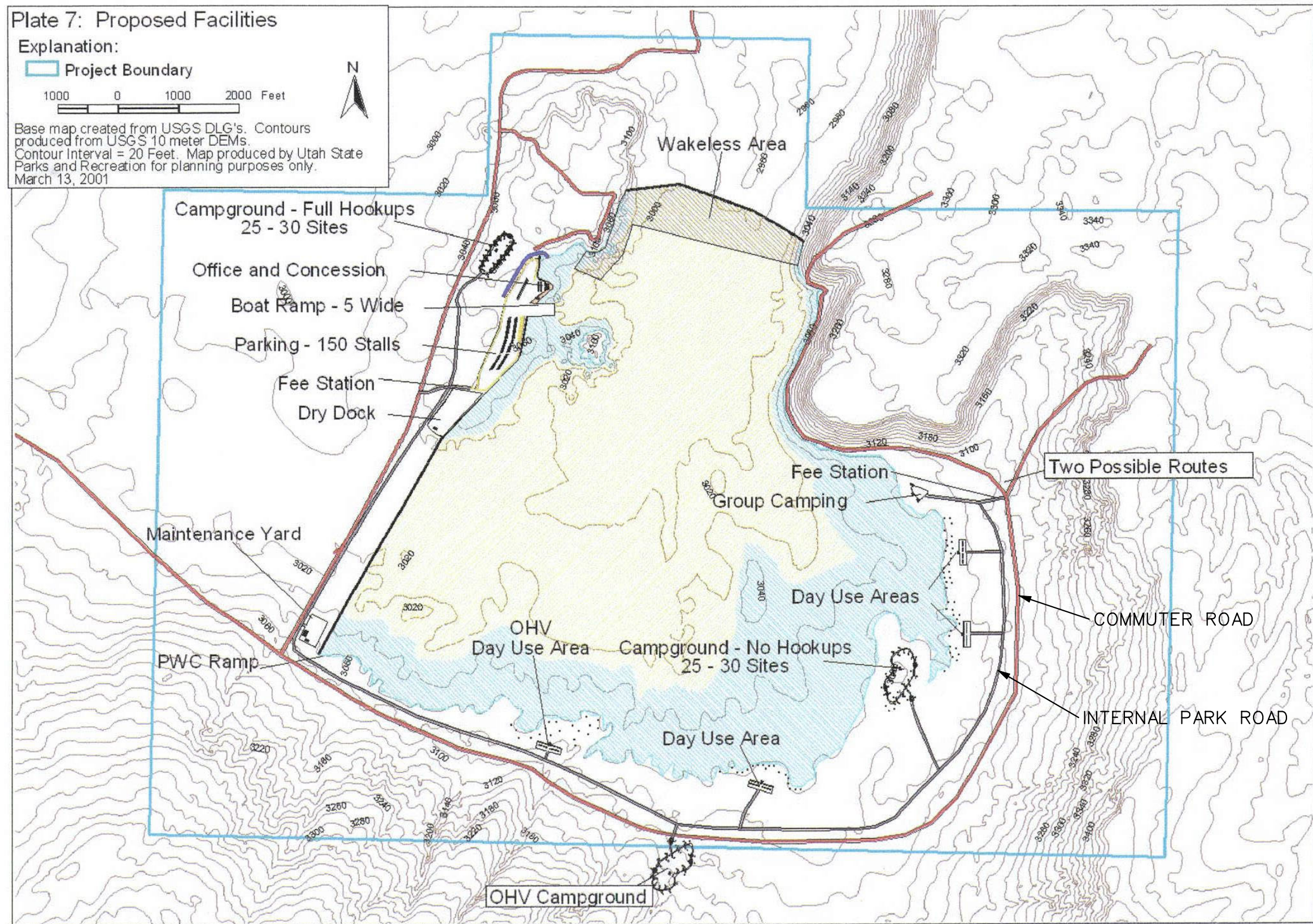
# Plate 7: Proposed Facilities

## Explanation:

Project Boundary

1000 0 1000 2000 Feet

Base map created from USGS DLG's. Contours produced from USGS 10 meter DEMs. Contour Interval = 20 Feet. Map produced by Utah State Parks and Recreation for planning purposes only. March 13, 2001

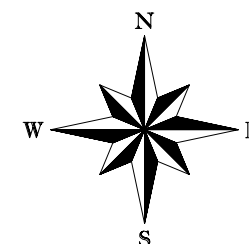


## LEGEND

Figure 5-2

## PROPOSED FACILITIES

0 5000 10000  
FEET



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